

Appl. No. : 09/676,895  
Filed : October 2, 2000

connect and disconnect the second passage with the combustion chamber, the engine being disposed within the hull such that the axis of the connecting rod journal lies to one side of the center plane throughout an entire rotation of the crankshaft and both the first and second valve devices are disposed on the other side of the center plane.

29. (new) A watercraft comprising an internal combustion engine and a hull defining a center plane extending generally vertically from bow to stern, the internal combustion engine comprising a cylinder body mounted within the hull, the cylinder body defining a cylinder bore, a piston reciprocating within the cylinder bore, a connecting rod coupled to the piston, a crankshaft including a connecting rod journal having an axis about which the connecting rod moves, a cylinder head member closing an end of the cylinder bore and defining a combustion chamber with the cylinder bore and the piston, an air intake passage introducing air to the combustion chamber, and an exhaust passage receiving exhaust gases from the combustion chamber, an intake valve arranged to selectively open and close the air intake passage, an exhaust valve arranged to open and close the exhaust passage, an intake camshaft arranged to actuate the intake valve, an exhaust camshaft arranged to actuate the exhaust valve, the engine being disposed within the hull such that the axis of the connecting rod journal lies to one side of the center plane throughout an entire rotation of the crankshaft and both the intake and exhaust camshafts rotate about axes that lie on the other side of the center plane.

#### COMMENTS

In response to the Office Action mailed January 27, 2003, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the above-captioned application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following comments.

Applicants would initially like to thank Examiner Swinehart for the courteous telephonic interview extended to Applicant's counsel, Bill Shreve, on April 3, 2003. Applicants have amended Claims 20 and 21 along the lines discussed during the interview, which the Examiner agreed would overcome the outstanding rejections. On the basis of the interview and in response to the Office Action mailed January 27, 2003, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider the above-captioned application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following comments.

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The Applied Combination of Nakase et al./Isaka Does Not Render Obvious The Engine Recited By Claims 20 and 21

Claims 20 and 21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Nakase et al. in view of Isaka. Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 20 and 21 as amended overcome the rejection because the prior art references do not teach or suggest the recited layout of the engine in a watercraft. That is, as discussed during the interview, Nakase et al. in combination with Isaka does not teach or suggest, *inter alia*, an engine layout in which the axis of the crankshaft connecting rod journal lies to one side of the center plane throughout an entire rotation of the crankshaft.

New Claims 28 and 29 Have Been Added

New Claims 28 and 29 have been added to provide protection of a differing scope for certain aspects of the present invention. These claims are not anticipated or rendered obvious by the applied references. For example, none of the applied references discloses, teaches or suggests, *inter alia*, an engine layout in which an axis of the connecting rod journal lies to one side of a center plane throughout an entire rotational of the crankshafts and both the first and second valve devices are disposed on the other side of the center plane. Consideration of Claims 28 and 29 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections set forth in the outstanding Office Action are inapplicable to the present claims. Accordingly, early issuance of a Notice of Allowance is most earnestly solicited.

The undersigned has made a good faith effort to respond to all of the rejections raised in the Office Action so as to place the claims in condition for immediate allowance. Nevertheless, if any undeveloped issues remain or if any issues require clarification, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant's attorney, Bill Shreve at (949) 721-2895 (direct line) in order to resolve such issue promptly.

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Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.



Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: May 27, 2003

By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William H. Shreve", written over a horizontal line.

William H. Shreve  
Registration No. 35,678  
Attorney of Record  
2040 Main Street  
Fourteenth Floor  
Irvine, CA 92614

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